



South Mountain Corridor Study Citizens Advisory Team Meeting Summary

Date: January 19, 2006
Time: 5:30 p.m.
Location: District 6 Komatke Center, Learning Center Meeting Hall

CAT Members Attending:

Kris Black, Ahwatukee Foothills HOA
Steve Boschen, Valley Forward
Jim Buster, Avondale
Clayton Danzeisen, Maricopa County Farm Bureau
Doris French, Laveen Village Planning Committee
Michael Goodman, Phoenix Mountains Preservation Council
Don Jones, Southwest Valley Chamber of Commerce
David Lafferty, Tolleson

Wayne Nelson, GRIC District 7
Patrick Panetta (for Laurel Arndt) Ahwatukee Foothills Village Planning Committee
Laurie Prendergast, Laveen Citizens for Responsible Development
John D. Rodriguez, Lakewood HOA
Jim Strogen, Kyrene de los Lagos Elementary School
Dave Williams, Knight Transportation/AMTA

Staff and Consultants:

Jack Allen, HDR
Mark Brodbeck, HDR
Mike Bruder, ADOT
Kelly Cairo, GCI
Chris Clary-Lemon, HDR
Amy Edwards, HDR

Fred Garcia, ADOT
Theresa Gunn, GCI
Bill Hayden, ADOT
Bob Hazlett, MAG
Don Herp, COP
Dan Lance, ADOT

Roger Roy, MAG
Steve Thomas, FHWA
Doug Torres, GRICDOT
Bill Vachon, FHWA
Kurt Watzek, HDR

Citizens:

Jack Bollwinkel
Norm Dahle
David Folts
Jim Jochim

Matthew Alan Lord
Doug Murphy
Corinne Purtill
William Ramsay

Greta Rogers
Brian Smith
Dave Swisher
David Underwood

ACTION PLAN

Task/Activity	Who	When
Reply to CAT questions: Is there current air quality monitor data at the school located in the northeast quadrant of the SR 51/202L interchange? Would there be pre and post freeway data available?	Ralph Ellis to relay response from Fred Garcia	1-26-06 CAT meeting
Verify whether the SRP sub-station planned for the 57 th -58 th Ave./Baseline area is on the utilities map.	Amy Edwards	1-26-06 CAT meeting
Reply to CAT question: What is the cost estimate to depress at Dobbins completely?	Amy Edwards	1-26-06 CAT meeting
Provide evaluation criteria developed by the CAT; add safety as a criterion heading after operations	Theresa Gunn	1-26-06 CAT meeting

Welcome

Theresa Gunn welcomed attendees and explained that presenters would be using a microphone. CAT members were invited to request microphone use. She reported that several CAT members had approached her regarding their frustration with the meeting process, including the intensity of discussion on east side issues. She explained that the remaining CAT reports would continue to include all east and west side information; however, for the purpose of completing the report schedule, only west side information would be presented at the remaining meetings. East side information will be presented at meetings following the CAT evaluation of the west side alternatives.

CAT Member Questions and Comments:

Comment: We don't always get all of the information, therefore people think we are repeating issues. We need to do this to get the answer at the appropriate time.

Comment: My biggest concern is questions asked at the end of the meeting. We should answer these at the following meeting or post answers on the website.

Comment: I have felt that this has become a Pecos Road committee and discussion. This is not part of the current decision-making process.

Comment: There are issues on the east side that will impact a west side decision. I don't want to exclude being able to ask questions about the east side if it affects the west side.

Comment: We spend 80 percent of our time on east side issues. This group seems to have lost its focus on the purpose of providing feedback.

Gunn also reported that she had received numerous complaints about the public comment process from CAT members. She requested comments on this process.

CAT Member Questions and Comments:

Comment: I have no objection to tossing aside an issue that has been covered. But someone new may not be aware that a question has been answered.

Comment: I think we should collect all of the questions and respond to them.

Comment: Questions should be collected and posted on the website. The last meeting was excessive. The questions were not asked in good faith.

Comment: People need to know that we have received their questions, but we could view these in the packet. There is no discussion on these issues currently.

Comment: I find the questions fascinating. Part of the problem is that they are at the end of the meeting. We should move the meetings to the east side, particularly when we discuss east side issues.

Comment: I don't know if we need a different process. I am not sure about the value of reading the comments. If a question is not answered, it is our responsibility to check to see that it is answered.

Comment: If we move the meetings, we should go to other communities too.

Gunn summarized options including reading public comments until the close of the meeting at 9 p.m., or to collect, type, distribute and discuss comments at the next meeting. She asked CAT members for their preference on the public comment process.

CAT Member Questions and Comments:

Comment: We should collect the comments, review a typed copy, and discuss at the next meeting.

Comment: I agree, but we should call Theresa if we want one of these topics added to the agenda.

Comment: We should collect comments and discuss at the next meeting.

Comment: I would like to see written comments and respond at the next meeting.

Comment: Either option is fine. But we should think about other public meetings, in which topics that are not on the agenda are not allowed for discussion.

Comment: I would prefer written comments.

Comment: I would like written comments, and if time allows at the end, we could cover new questions that have been submitted.

Comment: I would like written comments.

Comment: Written comments, with being able to address new questions at the end of the meeting if time allows.

Gunn asked the CAT if they would like to receive written comments, typed by staff, and distributed to the CAT and the public. At the request of the CAT, these issues could be added to the next agenda. Additionally, if time permits, new questions could be read and addressed at the end of the meeting. The CAT consensus was to put forth this method for accepting public comments at this and future CAT meetings.

Gunn also noted that any group can request a presentation from ADOT regarding the project, and that requests are accommodated as time and schedules allow.

Project Update

Matt Burdick reported that ADOT presented South Mountain and other project information to the Avondale City Council on January 9. Upcoming meetings include:

- Phoenix Sonoran Preserve Committee, January 23
- Tolleson City Council, January 24
- Ahwatukee Chamber of Commerce, (date pending)

He also noted that ADOT Director Victor Mendez and FHWA Arizona Division Administrator Bob Hollis met with incoming GRIC Governor William Rhodes. Additional meetings are planned to continue their discussions on South Mountain Freeway and other ADOT projects.

Amy Edwards introduced Fred Garcia, ADOT. Because the Air Quality Report will be presented at the next meeting and Garcia will be out of town, he provided an overview of air quality information. Highlights included:

- ADOT concentrates on measuring PM₁₀ and Carbon Monoxide (CO).
- CO is a pollutant when it comes out of the tailpipe.
- For the most part, ADOT can't respond to ozone in a corridor. Ozone does not become a pollutant until it mixes with air outside of the tailpipe and the air is heated to create the pollutant.
- ADOT monitors CO.
- The Las Vegas court case addresses mobile source air toxins. This is a new issue that is being researched and standards have not been established.
- Maricopa Association of Governments is responsible for the regional air quality compliance.
- ADOT modeling is project-specific for CO and PM₁₀.
- The issue of mobile source air toxins is evolving.
- An air quality video is available at www.adotenvironmental.com.

CAT Member Questions and Comments:

Question: Do allowable parts per million levels change based on the time of year?

Response: No, this is consistent throughout the year.

Question: Is there monitoring during a project? **Response:** There is ongoing monitoring performed by Maricopa County 24-hours a day at monitors throughout the region.

Question: Do you anticipate monitoring at schools, as in Las Vegas? **Response:** If there was an exceedance, this could occur.

Question: Does the Las Vegas case establish a new standard? **Response:** No, it is just for that area. We typically select a sensitive population for monitoring. We must either stay under established limits or make changes.

Question: What if monitoring stations show values that are too high after the project is established? **Response:** We use modeling and monitoring to predict future levels as well.

Comment: In 2007, there will be new truck emission standards. **Response:** The Clean Air Act is stage-implemented. With sulfur removal, we gain cleaner emissions. The models take this change into account. Additionally, the MAG traffic model includes data regarding slower-moving traffic on streets, which occurs now, compared to faster-moving traffic on a freeway. MAG must demonstrate that a project would stay under its regional emissions budget. This information is part of what is included in the no-build analysis.

Question: Will the report next week show monitoring sites? **Response:** Yes.

Question: How do you predict traffic back up points, which would therefore result in higher emission? **Response:** Travel-demand models include this analysis. Also, emissions budgets decrease every year, and MAG must show conformity to these decreasing emissions budgets.

Technical Report Review

Amy Edwards explained that because the CAT received the Cultural Resources and Construction Cost reports at the meeting, these reports would be reviewed in greater detail. Other reports reviewed included Biology and Utilities. Due to outstanding issues, the Secondary and Cumulative Impacts Report will be discussed at the next meeting. She introduced Kurt Watzek and Mark Brodbeck, HDR, who addressed technical questions.

Edwards reviewed the Biology Report, which includes impacts to wildlife and native biological species. The Endangered Species Act is a federal law. The report includes the area two miles beyond the study area limits.

Biology Report/CAT Member Questions and Comments:

Question: How do you define major migration corridors? **Response:** This means movement related to season or breeding, for example. In the study area, there is general movement within territories, but not migration.

Question: How do you handle animals that cross and get stuck on one side or the other when a project goes in? **Response:** Species that cross usually have small territories. There is no way to tell them where to go. They often take advantage of drainage pipes.

Question: What about the natural flow of water down South Mountain? **Response:** On the western section it would be captured in a drainage channel and the water would be moved. It would not be our intent to block the flow.

Question: Small animals move closer to the water as the area dries. How do you direct the mountain lion to the water? **Response:** South Mountain does not have the necessary life requirements in order for a mountain lion to live on South Mountain. Mountain lions require a 100 square mile area (approximately).

Question: The South Mountain master plan had three pages of information regarding animals and plants. Are these other species considered, or just the small list we see in this report? **Response:** There is a much more extensive list in the full report than what is shown in the draft report. NEPA concentrates on threatened and endangered species. Also, habitat connectivity is being looked at by many groups and is becoming a consideration regardless of whether there is any obligation to do so, such as putting in structures to assist with connectivity.

Question: How many years are used to determine migration? **Response:** In this case, we are looking at the dispersal of populations. These species are not long-lived. In a suburban environment, we look more at the present because the land uses are changing rapidly.

Question: Do you know where a good joint use might be for drainage and wildlife use? **Response:** We are working on these issues.

Edwards reviewed the Cultural Resources Report. She explained that much of the cultural information is sensitive and therefore there is not a comprehensive report at ADOT that can be reviewed. Considerations include historic and prehistoric issues, and National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and those properties eligible for NRHP-

listing. Some alignments have already been shifted with SMCAT assistance to accommodate areas that have been discovered. Two phases of investigation during the EIS process include archeological testing (Phase I) and data recovery excavation (Phase II).

Cultural Resources Report/CAT Member Questions and Comments:

Question: What constitutes a railroad? **Response:** This could be anything from the railroad corridor, bed, rails, and historical features to the railroad itself.

Question: Does ADOT buy land and then do studies? **Response:** There would be a survey prior to purchase. ADOT pays for the survey and mitigation prior to sale.

Question: Is there anything cultural that would change an alignment? **Response:** Yes, and we have already moved alignments. Petroglyphs are more complicated because moving them can change their significance. We also develop a programmatic agreement prior to construction, which is a plan for handling unexpected finds during construction.

Question: The footprint at South Mountain would be larger if there was blasting. How do you mitigate for this? **Response:** We would do a supplemental survey. We do our best to anticipate the design, but we do at times reevaluate based on what is discovered.

Question: What about the potential for South Mountain to become a Traditional Cultural Property (TCP)? What is the breaking point, or the point at which too much would have to be mitigated? **Response:** A TCP becomes a Section 4(f) property and there is a process that must be followed.

Question: I know on SR 85 there were a lot of drainage issues. Were there cultural issues? **Response:** Yes, this is an example of where ADOT moved the alignment.

Comment: There are mounds built for passage and travel from here to Coolidge. I disagree with the federal government deciding when to go through a cultural site. We have sites 500-700, even 900 years old. South Mountain, the whole mountain, is a historical site regardless of who claims ownership. **Response:** The Section 106 process is about identifying sites, but it doesn't preclude the government from going through a site.

Question: If GRIC determines that an area is extremely important, do they have the ability to say that nothing can be built or would they have to take it to court? If it became a court issue, what would that do to the planning process? **Response:** GRIC is incorporated into the consultation process. There are also more sites on the west side that are culturally significant, but that can't be discussed publicly. **Reply:** I think it is important to consider how to avoid legal problems. **Response:** Part of the reason we carry the no-build option through to the end of the process is to consider whether the impacts exceed the benefits. No-build may be the best decision.

Question: Is there a list of certain items that must be considered traditional cultural property? **Response:** We are in these discussions now. However, there is not a list of specific rules as to what will or won't be mitigated. The Section 106 process applies, but a project may also look to Section 4(f) regarding reasonable and prudent options.

Edwards reviewed the Utilities Report. She explained areas common to all of the western alternatives, and additional impacts related to specific west side alternatives. On the west

side, there are not any parallel utilities, as there are on the east side. There are areas on the west side with perpendicular utilities. There is an area with a project drainage feature that would overlap an existing utility, however, the drainage area can be shifted. Also, if a business requires a railroad spur, we must accommodate continued access to a spur.

Utilities Report/CAT Member Questions and Comments:

Question: What about planned utilities? **Response:** To the extent possible, we work with the utilities in advance of a project. If we know of their plans, that information is included on these maps.

Question: Are power lines that would interfere raised? **Response:** This depends on a lot of issues and involves coordination with the utilities.

Question: Is the planned SRP sub-station for the 57th-58th Avenue and Baseline area on the map? **Response:** We will check.

Comment: I don't see an alternative that shows raising the freeway. **Response:** Discussion with the business owner would have to occur regarding whether they want to remain under a freeway. It is an option during the design phase. However, the freeway either needs to span the building, or a freeway support must be accommodated.

Question: Why does a business have the option of staying? **Response:** In this case, the profile doesn't require an elevated freeway.

Question: Would there be restrictions on businesses like the tank farm? **Response:** Yes, this would fall under a different set of issues. A meeting with the tank farm representatives is scheduled for next week.

Question: US 60 had issues regarding ADOT repairs to SRP irrigation lines. As a major stakeholder, has SRP expressed an opinion? **Response:** No, but we encourage them to let us know if they have a preference.

Edwards reviewed the Construction Cost Report. This report includes constructions costs, but neither right-of-way, nor mitigation expenses. Right-of-way estimates will be provided to the CAT as soon as it is available, and is expected at the end of January. Mitigation estimates are developed throughout the process. Construction costs include various levels of estimating. The most current data is used for costs, and there is a contingency built in to these costs.

Construction Cost Report/CAT Member Questions and Comments:

Question: Right-of-way costs will change how these figures look. **Response:** Yes, we agree. There are also distinctions in construction costs such as an I-10 interchange, railroad spurs, and so forth.

Comment: No one knows what land will cost in five years. **Response:** There is no way to predict this. We use today's costs for comparison. We don't have a procedure for projecting because markets change so quickly. In just six months, we have seen great change in construction costs.

Question: With the groundwater in Laveen being lower than expected, the freeway could be fully depressed in that area, but it still shows up as semi-depressed. Is ADOT willing

to fully depress this area? What would this cost? **Response:** When the cost information was prepared, there had not been a decision. We can get the cost for fully depressed in that area.

Comment: There should be a bullet regarding South Mountain in the section above the table. **Response:** You are correct.

Question: Are the segments listed in the order in which they would be built? **Response:** No, they are shown in milepost order.

Question: About what percentage does right-of-way add on average? **Response:** This will vary over time. Right-of-way is probably 35 percent of the total.

Question: Do these figures include soft costs for ADOT? **Response:** It does include management of design but not maintenance.

Question: At what point does a difference in numbers influence the selection of the preferred alternative? **Response:** This varies on a case-by-case basis. It is but one of the evaluation criteria.

Question: Is there any way to compare what makes the big difference between the high and low cost? **Response:** All of the Loop 101 options are the most due to the elevation and cost of connecting to L101.

Question: Could there be simultaneous work on all of the sections at the same time? **Response:** Yes, however, this will depend on the implementation plan.

Question: How will cities mitigate traffic during construction? **Response:** This is part of the implementation plan.

SMCAT Evaluation Process

Gunn explained that the CAT previously brainstormed concepts for a perfect freeway. They used this information to begin to develop statements, which will become evaluation criteria. She asked the CAT to review the statements, and develop evaluation criteria. She reminded the group that a standard could be something that can't necessarily be achieved.

After discussion, the group developed the following criteria statements. An updated version of the evaluation criteria will be provided at the next meeting.

Noise/CAT Member Questions and Comments:

Noise levels in proximity to the freeway should remain low and unobtrusive to normal everyday life and not exceed 64 dB.

Multi-Modal/CAT Member Questions and Comments:

The corridor provides for existing and future transit opportunities, park & ride facilities, and multi-use trails.

Design Obsolescence/CAT Member Questions and Comments:

The design provides for 2030 average daily traffic at a level of service D or better while providing for community access.

CAT members were asked to develop statements for the remaining criteria for the next meeting. Those who wish to e-mail these statements to Gunn prior to the next meeting, were asked to do so by close of business on Tuesday, January 25.

Gunn asked the group if they would like discussion time prior to the February 2 Evaluation meeting. She also asked for comments on when they would like to proceed with continuing to review east side information.

CAT Member Questions and Comments:

Comment: I would like to see the flyover again.

Question: Will you have all of the reports available if we have additional questions?

Response: yes.

Comment: I have had a problem with doing this review by section. I would like to consider the east side as a whole. When would all of the information be available?

Response: We could have the information in a couple of months.

Comment: I would like to avoid spring break and Easter (April 16).

Comment: Now we are holding the east side hostage. **Response:** ADOT will not be able to evaluate an east side preferred alternative until the reports are in.

Question: What is ADOT's deadline for a west side decision? **Response:** West side announcement of a preferred alternative is late-February/early-March. There is not currently a timeline for the east side.

Comment: Would we make an east side decision in May? **Response:** It may be premature to do so, especially if there is new information from the east side.

Question: Will we move those meetings to an Ahwatukee location? **Response:** We will discuss this prior to the February 2 evaluation.

Gunn asked the group if a May meeting was the consensus. The group agreed.

Written Comments/Questions Submitted by the Public:

Comments and questions received during the meeting are recorded here verbatim from forms received.

Brian Smith

1. What biological species are identified within the project area that are endangered and/or protected (specifically)?
2. Are you saying there is no significant movement of species between So. Mountain and the Estrella Mts?

Greta Rogers

1. Will the meetings (future) be publicly noticed and open to all, including the one with Gov. Wm. Rhodes, GRIC?

2. Why NOW are you devoting meeting agendas to West Side routes and not the entire plan I-10E to I-10W (no defined terminus to date); This reflects planned avoidance of Pecos.

3. “Impossible to measure ozone” in project corridor; can measure CO₂ emissions from vehicles at locations chosen and CO₂ must be addressed regionally.” Why don’t you reveal EPA requirements – They’re known and established and Phoenix area on notice for compliance of P. 10 by end of 2006 and now due to exceedence of compliance and impossible goal to attain (notice to ADEQ by EPA 12/05).

William Ramsay

NEPA requires all cumulative impacts of a proposed project to be examined in the EIS process. The I-10 reliever must be considered in the EIS process as it will be connected to the proposed South Mountain Loop 202, and both are connected and interrelated.

David Folts

Concerned Families Along S Mt Loop 202

1. During the summary of Cultural Resources you mentioned reporting on impacts to prehistoric sites. Please define what a prehistoric site is.

2. Is there a required release rate (flow, gpm) over area when directing rainwater, runoff to lower area? If there is, what is this rate and what engineering principles are used to control this rate.

3. I can’t understand why many of the planned construction schedules for highways in the extreme south and east of Phoenix (area, SanTan, etc.) don’t start until the years 2020 through 2030 instead of planning and making the alignments now. Construction for the above mentioned areas should start before the end of decade to avoid severe traffic problems a.k.a. staying ahead of the curve.

4. If ADOT builds the west side of proposed S Mt Loop 202 first, then years later build the Ahwatukee portion of this highway would it require another EIS? How long does this Environmental Impact Statement stay in effect? Is there a time frame this entire project must be completed by according to laws concerning EIS policy?

5. If traffic (S MT Loop 202) was diverted from existing regional existing air monitors wouldn’t this benefit? What is referred to as Regional Air Quality scores?

6. I have heard mention of Particulate Matter 10 being measured and possible being reduced in future air data along with being included in proposed S Mt Loop 202. Aren’t PM_{2.5} reading to be included in the EIS? Also, why wasn’t there a discussion on PM_{2.5} with projects on same?

7. It appears that the majority of 202 that runs between 10 and Loop 101 running west along southern edge of Chandler is fully depressed or semi-depressed. Ho and why was this design and build decision made?

8. During the EIS presentation of Cultural Resources, Mark Brodbeck from HDR Engineering state they do surveys to ensure cultural sites are found before construction begins. How are the surveys done and how would this be handled i.e. North America Native Artifacts be found if they were only inches below the surface of the soil? Will any attempt made to find out if artifacts reside just below the soil?

CAT Member Comment Cards

Statements shown below are recorded verbatim from comment cards.

Questions/Comments

- Cost estimate to depress at Dobbins completely.

Adjourn:

Next CAT Meeting

The next CAT meeting will be held Thursday, January 26, 2006 at 5:30 p.m. at the Learning Center Meeting Hall, Komatke Center, in District Six.